



Town of Thomaston
First Selectman's Office
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Testimony in Support of Prosed HB 5515
An Act Allowing the designation of the Town of Thomaston
as an Enterprise Zone

The Town of Thomaston is located in the Naugatuck Valley in western Connecticut. The City of Waterbury borders Thomaston to the south has Economic Zone designation. Bristol and Plymouth to the east of Thomaston enjoy enhanced designations, and Torrington and Winsted, to the north also enjoy Economic Corridor designations, thereby leaving Thomaston, orphaned amongst towns in its proximity and at a disadvantage as it relates to economic competitiveness with its neighbors.

Thomaston has long been a manufacturing community whose roots date back to when clock making was a major industry in the State of Connecticut. Industry continues to this day to be a significant as an employer and tax payer in Thomaston. Manufacturers such as Ward Leonard, Summit Corporation, Eyelets for Industry, Stevens Company and Unimetals continue to reside in Thomaston. With additional assistance, beyond what we can provide as a town, they may well expand and prosper thereby creating needed employment and increased tax base for our community. The old Plume & Atwood site is now in the process of remediation and may soon be on the market. An enhanced economic designation could serve to return this vastly underutilized property into a productive site with such assistance as well.

Within the Council of Governments Central Naugatuck Valley (COGCNV) Thomaston ranks 11th out of 13 municipalities in terms of median income (\$ 64,892). Median income for the State of Connecticut as a whole equals \$ 69,243. Total households in Thomaston equal 3,245. Of those households 1,075 earn less than \$ 50,000 a year or about 1/3. Unemployment stands at 8.5% and ranks us 10th in our COG. All of this data is derived from 2011 census. Lastly, Thomaston's Equalized Grand List (EGL) equals \$751,534,593 ranks us 10th amongst others in our COG. This data comes directly from the Office of Policy and Management (OPM).

I share this information with you to simply make the point. Thomaston resides in the lower group of municipalities as it relates to economic indicators in its region. While we continue to maintain a few high quality manufacturers, we struggle to offer them incentive to remain in town and grow and prosper. That is precisely what we hope to achieve and with some assistance from you, the State of Connecticut, we hope to make that vision a reality.

Please join with me and Representative Piscopo by supporting this bill so that Thomaston can assist its business community to develop greater employment opportunities and enhance the tax base so that we will be capable of continuing to provide the needed service to our constituents at a cost that they can afford.

Sincerely,
Edmond V. Mone
First Selectman